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**REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE SITUATION
IN PALESTINE AND THE MIDDLE EAST**

**REPORT ON PALESTINE AND THE MIDDLE EAST
FOR THE PERIOD FROM JUNE 2018 TO JANUARY 2019**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The African Union reaffirms its solidarity with the Palestinian people's right to freedom and the establishment of an independent state, and believes that a just and comprehensive peace is the strategic choice to end the Israeli occupation of the entire occupied Palestinian and Arab territories until the June 4, 1967 line, so as to ensure restoration of peace and security in the region. The establishment of an independent and sovereign State with East Jerusalem as its capital, and the return of the Palestinian refugees to their lands and homes from which they were expelled, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy.

2. The African Union monitors the political situation in the Middle East as well as the political and field developments in occupied Palestine, where the situation has witnessed escalation and tension, the closure of political horizon, and the chances of resuming the political process through negotiations. This is due to Israel's intransigence, which is based on the current US administration's position on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The US administration has shown absolute bias toward Israel in its policies. And relocated the US embassy to the occupied city of Jerusalem in a preemptive step to impose a solution on both sides, excluding Jerusalem from the final negotiations on the two-state solution, and to resolve the issue based on a de facto policy.

3. The US administration has also tried to impose restrictions on the legitimate Palestinian leadership and to pressure it to accept the American peace initiative called the "Century Deal", which the US administration began to implement on the ground without being formally announced. On the other hand, the Palestinian leadership rejected the American administration's policy of "thick sticks"; rejected US measures; announced a freeze on its relations with the US administration; refused to meet its staff and rejected the role of unfair mediation in response to Israel's absolute bias.

4. These measures followed the escalation of the situation on the ground in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and received a public donation in response to the violation of Palestinian national rights and the American administration's decision on Jerusalem. The Israeli occupation forces confronted the demonstrators with extreme violence and blatant assaults, which caused deaths of martyrs and wounded others in an overwhelming number, indicating the criminal nature of the Israeli repression against the demonstrators, which has claimed the lives of children, elderly and women, medical staff and media personnel, and those with special needs who have not been delivered from the Israeli army.

5. On the other hand, the African Union is deeply concerned about the policies of the Israeli Government in support of the settlement process and the acceleration of its pace, and to unleash the settlers' aggression against the Palestinians, their property and sanctities, especially in the city of Jerusalem. The US administration overlooks these

policies in an attempt to seize and displace Palestinian land, while warning at the same time of the danger of pursuing this policy, which would impose a reality, impossible to implement the two-state solution, in accordance with international consensus on the basis of resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which would fuel the conflict and the high frequency of violence, and drag the region into a war we fear its consequences.

II. THE POLITICAL SITUATION AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS:

6. The Palestinian side has repeatedly affirmed its commitment to the peace process and negotiations without preconditions, that all final status issues should be on the negotiating table, and that the Palestinian side has done everything necessary for the success of all previous, secret and public negotiations. Recently, President Abbas presented a peace initiative in his speech at Security Council, and the Israeli side called for its acceptance and the world to sponsor it. While the Israeli side has thwarted all negotiations and rejected the call for peace by denying the references to international peace processes and resolutions of international legitimacy, through expansionist colonial settlement measures that undermine the two-state solution and trying to close the door to a viable, sovereign and territorial Palestinian state with the occupied East Jerusalem as its capital.

7. As Israeli attacks escalate against Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, which comes within the framework of Israeli plans aimed at the liquidation of the Palestinian cause and the just and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. In this context, the provocative statements made by a number of the right-wing elements in Israel against the Palestinian president and the repeated accusations of the Palestinian side of evading the negotiations are repeated. In the framework of misleading propaganda of world public opinion and international officials, to evade the responsibility of the occupying state, which is clear to disrupt and thwart all forms of negotiations, and to obstruct and thwart all international efforts to launch them again.

8. On the Palestinian-Israeli front, the United States moved from a biased State of Israel in its sponsorship of the political process to a state that worked to impose the American-Israeli solution by force in practical politics and to reformulate internationally recognized concepts and terminology in its political and legal sense. To exert unprecedented pressure on the Palestinian side, politically and financially, in the context of imposing conditions that Washington considers necessary to remove the obstacles that prevent or continue to prevent the resumption of negotiations, let alone reach a solution to the conflict. These include: the authority's reliance on a field approach in the face of acts of resistance to the occupation. And to stop the transfer of funds to the Gaza Strip to cut the lifeline of contribution to the financing of Hamas budgets, and to stop paying salaries to the families of the martyrs and prisoners.

9. In this context, the Trump administration, in preparation for imposing its solution called the "deal of the age" on the Palestinian side, reverted to a series of unilateral steps, in the context of laying down the facts on the ground:

- The US State Department's decision to close the Office of the PLO Commission in Washington (17/11/2017), its closure later (10/9/2018) and keeping the organization under terrorism charges against the backdrop of the Congress's decision to consider the PLO a terrorist organization since 1987.
- Freezing financial aid to the Palestinian Authority and pressuring it to abandon its duties and responsibilities for the families of prisoners, martyrs and the wounded under the pretext of "combating terrorism". In this context, Congress passed the Taylor-Force Act (23/3/2018).
- Pressure Western countries to follow the example of the United States on the financing of the Authority, in the context of pressurizing to give up duties to the families of martyrs, prisoners and the wounded, with the same pretext.
- All this corresponds to unlimited support for Israel in the UN Security Council, the UN General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, relevant international agencies and other organizations, and the disruption of UN resolutions in condemning Israel and its crimes against the Palestinian people.

10. The Palestinian leadership rejected these measures. The leadership's efforts, the steadfastness of the Palestinian people and the decisions of the recent Palestinian Central Council demonstrated the Palestinian determination to resist and reject any projections of the legitimate status of Palestine. And that cohesion between the people and leadership is capable of thwarting all schemes and plots aimed at undermining the rights and will of the people. The Palestinian National Council and the Central Council have taken fateful decisions to confront these American measures and Israeli abuses, the most important of which are:

- Authorize the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization to suspend recognition of Israel until it recognizes the State of Palestine on the 1967 borders.
- Considering that the transitional period stipulated in the agreements signed in Oslo, Cairo and Washington, with its obligations, no longer exists.
- Initiate the embodiment of the sovereignty of the State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital on the borders of June 4, 1967. In implementation of the resolutions of the Palestinian National Council, including the 1988 Declaration of Independence and relevant United Nations resolutions.
- Condemn and reject US President Donald Trump's decision to consider Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, relocating his embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and working to bring him down. He considered that the US administration by this decision has lost its eligibility as a mediator and sponsor of the peace process, and will be a partner in this process only after the annulment of the resolution.
- The Palestinian Central Council stressed the need to nullify the decision of Congress to consider the PLO as a terrorist organization since 1987, and

the decision of the US State Department to close the organization's office in Washington.

- He also affirmed the right of the Palestinian people to exercise all forms of struggle against occupation in accordance with the provisions of international law and to continue to activate and support the peaceful popular resistance and strengthen their capabilities.

III. PALESTINIAN REFUGEES, UNRWA, AND THE RACIST JEWISH NATIONAL LAW

11. The issue of the refugees and United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), and their focus on the right of return to their homes and property, has taken steps forward in the agenda of Palestinian interests, as well as on the Arab and international levels. Between the Palestinian and Israeli sides, and announced its position in the fall of the right of return in favor of solutions and alternative scenarios, when the current US administration stopped (31/8/2018) funding for UNRWA and called for the drying up of its resources on the way to resolve them and the transfer of services to host countries, as the US administration is deeply aware of the important role the Agency plays in providing services to refugees in various fields, and its position in politics and law as the international witness to the crime of the dispossession (Al-Nakba) and racial dispersal until the implementation of Resolution 194, which guarantees refugees the right to return to the homes and properties they have abandoned since 1948.

12. Trump's positions came within the context of American and Israeli policies calling for the abolition of the right of return and the resolution of the refugee issue through the so-called "permanent residence". Thus annulling everything related to the serious return of refugees to their homes and property, which is no more than for Israel, at best for more than a symbolic return. Trump's call this time is more dangerous than its predecessors because it carries practical steps to impose it on everyone and create facts unilaterally that will reflect itself on any future negotiations. Among these steps are:

- To prepare for the declaration of the death of UNRWA by stopping its funding and pressure on donors to dry up its resources;
- Working to redefine the Palestinian refugee through the provision of studies that redefine the refugee, so that it applies only to those born in Palestine before the Nakba and the demilitarization of their offspring, which automatically leads to the liquidation of the refugee issue and turn it from the issue of about 6 million refugees to a marginal issue for a few hundreds of the thousands who have become elderly. Time will ensure to resolve them over the next few years by a natural solution.

13. The Palestinian agenda focuses on the issue of refugees in order to deal with the "deal of the age", taking into consideration the diversity of the political and living conditions of the refugees in their dispersion in the Palestinian interior, in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and in the diaspora. The issue of refugees and the right of return has become central to the Palestinian National Program of Action in dealing with the "deal of the times" and to

address the projects of redefining the refugee to abolish his political and legal status, to dissolve the UNRWA and to reformulate its mandate.

14. In the areas of the Palestinian interior of 1948, some 300,000 Palestinian refugees living outside their villages and towns, which have been abandoned since 1948, are considered part of the refugee population at home and diaspora, with whom they struggle for the right of return and adherence to resolution 194. The 1948 refugees are an integral part of the overall Palestinian refugee population.

15. In the West Bank, the struggle of the Palestinian refugees to improve UNRWA's services and deliver on its duties, its advanced position in the refugee calendar, as well as the struggle for the right of return and alternative projects. In the Gaza Strip, the situation is characterized by the fact that more than 60% of its children are refugees. It is also characterized by the fact that UNRWA, because of the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip, plays a central role not only in the relief of refugees, He stressed the importance of UNRWA's social role and the location it plays politically. It represents the international community and recognizes its political and legal responsibilities for the Palestinian people affected by its cause and national rights, especially since the Gaza Strip is the headquarters of UNRWA and its decision-making center.

16. In Lebanon, the struggle for social and human rights and ensuring stability and security of the camps remains the primary task of refugees, as well as the important and progressive role that refugees play in addressing UNRWA's efforts to reduce UNRWA services in reconstruction of Nahr el Bared camp. In Syria, the central mission in the coming period is to provide the conditions for refugees to return to their camps and throughout the country, especially to the Yarmouk camp for the status and importance of the Yarmouk refugee camp, Daraa, Handarat, Sabina, Khan Al Sheheh and other Palestinian refugee communities. This requires the activation of the role of the UNRWA, the donors and the host country, including the General Organization for Refugees in Syria, to reduce and alleviate the suffering of tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees in Syria since 2011 and reduce the phenomenon of emigration.

17. On 18 July, the Israeli Knesset passed the Basic Law: "Israel - the national state of the Jewish people" - the idea of the law was born on July 22, 2013. The bill was subject to discussions, deliberations and amendments by the political and legal circles in Israel, until they agree on the necessity of its enacting, having been set aside for five full years. We can deduce from these right-wing transformations taking place at an accelerated pace within Israeli society, the degree of international support and condescension coordinated by the current US administration, to unleash the Israeli right-wing government by carrying out its racist programs. Despite the fact that the law of nationalism does not bear a new concept, it rather constitutes a legal ceiling, to the already racist Israeli policies. This law recognizes that the State of Israel is the national state of the Jewish people, and the exercise of the right to self-determination in the State of Israel is exclusive to the Jewish people (Article 1). The State is open to the arrival of Jews and the diaspora (section 5) Jewish national value and works to encourage and support the establishment and installation (item VII).

18. The American and Israeli perception of the Palestinian refugees and UNRWA will not affect the international community and will not make it a reality. This is clearly evident from the international consensus that rejects the American policy that is biased towards the Israeli occupation and the historical injustice on the Palestinian people and its successive generations. This carries with it a clear political message sent by the government of the right in the occupation state to all the countries of the world, namely the categorical refusal to deal with any efforts to resolve the conflict politically on the basis of the principle of two-state solution, and the state of public denial of the historical existence and civilization, cultural and national Palestinian people on the land of Palestine, and this is the maximum and affect the process of disparagement laws and international conventions and laws and the principles of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

IV. THE SITUATION IN OCCUPIED JERUSALEM AND SETTLEMENT:

19. Since the current US administration relocated its embassy to the occupied city of Jerusalem, and the implementation of this relocation on the anniversary of the Nakba, this administration showed the world a clear impression of its policy on the Palestinian issue, through its rebellion on the foundations and pillars of the international system, and UN resolutions related to the Palestinian issue, and the desire of this administration to impose a solution in line with the Israeli narrative and its vision to resolve the conflict. It is thus hostile to the feelings of Muslims and Christians in the world, and all calls and international consensus on the basis of the final solution between the Palestinians and the Israelis. Declaring the absolute bias of Israel.

20. This has given free hand to Israel and its settlers by launching a ferocious attack on settlements and the seizure of Palestinian land, especially in the city of Jerusalem. The ruling right in Israel took advantage of this American bias toward the occupation and its settlement policies excessively to implement all its colonial plans and expansionist measures in Jerusalem, which aim at Judaizing the Holy City, changing its legal and historical features and status, and separating it completely from its Palestinian surroundings. Thereby undermining any genuine international efforts to resolve the conflict through political negotiations in accordance with the international terms of reference on the basis of the two-state solution, resolving the final status issues unilaterally and in advance of any further negotiations between the parties.

21. The Israeli right-wing government administers settlement activity directly through official government bodies financed by the treasury of the occupation state. Over the past years, the settlers have helped to plant dozens of illegal settlement outposts, according to the official Israeli concept. Their organizations have helped to obtain loans from Israeli banks, also for this purpose, including the Settlement Division of the World Zionist Organization, and the Israeli Land Settlement Service of the Government, although previous Israeli reports, talked about the diversion of large sums of money from the budgets of ministries and official government departments in favor of settlements and its various organizations and associations.

22. The Israeli government's involvement in the theft of Palestinian land and the displacement of Palestinian citizens by the occupying power and their allocation for the purposes of building and settlement expansion, has become evident, not only local and international, but also Israeli documented video and audio, as a terrible crime that continues and is repeated every day, and encroach on the theft of the land and the execution and burning of Palestinian citizens, and the destruction and burning of their homes, Hebron and Jericho from attacks on vineyards and olive fields. These are the crimes of the settlements, which oblige the international community, especially the UN Security Council and the relevant UN organizations, to implement the UN resolutions on settlements, foremost of which is Resolution 2334. The failure to ensure the implementation of the resolutions of the international legitimacy on settlement places the credibility of the international positions claiming their commitment to the principles of human rights and peace on the basis of a two-state solution that is being questioned about the values maintained by the international system.

23. The High Court of Justice has approved the expulsion of the residents of the Bedouin community in Al-Khan Al-Ahmar, east of occupied Jerusalem, to implement the crime of mass forcible displacement, in order to expand and deepen the settlement in the eastern area of occupied Jerusalem towards the Dead Sea. This is considered a colonial act and a continuation of deepening settlement activity aimed at limiting the Palestinian presence in areas designated as Area C, in order to Judaize them. This is confirmed by data published by UN agencies and human rights organizations, including the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which indicate in their periodic reports the fact that the Israeli occupation authorities allocate theoretically less than 1% of the area of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (C) for Palestinian expansion and development.

24. The official Palestinian protests escalated this decision, and this official position was paralleled by an intensive public movement led by the Palestinian national action factions. An open sit-in was announced with the aim of nullifying the decision on Al Khan Al Ahmar, accompanied by an international media focus on the issue. International attitudes reject this arbitrary measure. Particularly the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the European Union (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom and the European Parliament) who called on the Israeli occupation authorities not to demolish Al Khan Al Ahmar and to displace its Palestinian population. Geographical communication and a two-state solution. In addition, the statement issued by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, in which Israel warned against the consequences of such a move.

25. The steadfastness of the residents of Al Khan Al-Ahmar, the Wall and Settlement Authority, the support of Palestinian citizens and international solidarity activists, including the Israelis, and their continued presence in ever-increasing numbers in Al Khan, confirmed the Palestinian people's steadfastness to the land, which forced Israeli officials to adopt a tactic aimed at absorbing reactions and international outrage by postponing

the implementation of the Israeli Supreme Court's decision to absorb Palestinian and international reactions.

26. On the official level, the State of Palestine has raised the issue of the Al Khan Al Ahmar before the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court when the State of Palestine submitted the first communication on 25 June 2015, which was linked to the colonial settlement system, which poses greatest threat to the lives of Palestinians, their sources of livelihood and their national rights. The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides monthly reports to the International Criminal Court, which monitors all violations, including those related to the Al Khan Al Ahmar, or any other violations committed by the Israeli occupation authorities, and raises the level of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

27. An additional communication was submitted on 11 September 2018 for the referral to the Criminal Court, which focuses on the impending danger faced by the inhabitants of the Al Khan Al Ahmar after the so-called Israeli Supreme Court has been convicted of the offense of deporting the inhabitants of Al Khan Al Ahmar and destroying their property. It contained a request to allow Palestinian victims to meet with the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. This communication was preceded by other communications specifically, which was submitted on 4 July 2018. This was in addition to the special meeting between the Palestinian Foreign Minister and the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on 16 July 2018, in which he gave a detailed explanation of the impending threat faced by the inhabitants of the Al Khan Al Ahmar and the catastrophic damage caused by the decision of the illegal Israeli occupation authorities, and demanded that it quickly open a criminal investigation into the continuing crimes committed by the Israeli occupation authorities, including those resulting from the colonial settlement system.

28. In a parallel Judaizing project revealed by the Hebrew media in July, the Israeli authorities decided to allocate millions of shekels for the implementation of a new settlement project in the town of Silwan in occupied East Jerusalem, with the participation of various Jewish settlement associations and under the leadership of ministers from the Israeli government. In October, the Israeli Ministry of Housing, in agreement with the Jerusalem Municipality and the so-called Israel Land Authority, approved the establishment of 20,000 new settlement units in various areas of Jerusalem, including thousands of settlement units in East Jerusalem, as well as commercial and industrial complexes and tourist projects in the settlement of Pisgat Zeev) and the French Hill and industrial settlement (Atarot), with the aim of consecrating the expansionist colonial project called Greater Jerusalem and the separation of occupied East Jerusalem from its Palestinian surroundings. According to the Hebrew media, billions of shekels have been earmarked for this settlement project, which, together with the new settlement units, will include the construction of public buildings, synagogues, gardens and the construction of huge settlement roads that will consume vast areas of the occupied Palestinian territory, which predicts the final closure of the door by the Israeli side to any chance of achieving peace on the basis of the two-state solution and the failure of any efforts to launch a genuine peace process.

29. In early November, the District Construction Committee approved the construction of more than 640 new settlement units in the Ramat Shlomo settlement in Occupied East Jerusalem, leading to the expansion of the settlement and the encirclement of adjacent Palestinian neighborhoods, and isolate them from each other, and to deprive them of any natural demographic expansion or growth. The construction of these units and others also destroys any opportunity to reach political solutions to the conflict in which East Jerusalem is the capital of the State of Palestine. It is noteworthy that these units had been previously approved and the Israeli government was unable to establish them because of opposition by the administration of the former US President Barack Obama.

30. While Israel is carrying out settlement and displacement operations on the ground in occupied East Jerusalem, it carries out serious Judaization and tunneling operations under Palestinian houses inside the Old City and in the southern area outside the walls of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The last of these excavations was revealed which is a new tunnel comprising three Sub-tunnels. It extends from Ein Silwan area south of Al-Aqsa mosque and towards Al-Buraq Square (the western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque). The town of Silwan is the site of many excavations carried out by the so-called Authority of Antiquities in the Occupation State in cooperation and funding partnership with the settlement associations, particularly (Alad) Association. These excavations threaten the foundations of the citizens' homes in the town. It is a means of occupation to force the Palestinians to leave their homes. The Israeli occupation forces deliberately consider the houses and buildings that are damaged (dangerous houses and buildings) threatened to be destroyed. The residents are evacuated without addressing the causes of this cracking, which are continued underground excavations.

31. As part of a comprehensive plan, Israel is implementing the construction of underground Jerusalem through a network of tunnels stretching down the courtyards of Al-Aqsa Mosque, a massive project through which Israel seeks to create what can be described as an "underground town", in which there is no reference to the true owners of the land. As a prelude to open it to the crowds of tourists, in order to pass the Israeli narrative on the city and its history. This requires UNESCO to assume its responsibilities and fulfill its obligations to protect Jerusalem, its religious and cultural identity and its implications, and to hold the occupying state accountable for its grave violations of international law and other relevant international law.

32. The Israeli Government and its various branches continue to escalate their colonial actions and measures aimed at deepening settlements and expanding the Judaization of occupied East Jerusalem and its environs, in conjunction with the targeting of Jerusalemites and their steadfastness in their holy city. To force them to abandon it and leave by force. The right-wing in Israel uses various methods, laws, courts and military orders, including falsification of land ownership, in an attempt to cover up the theft of Palestinian land and the displacement of Palestinian citizens. In this context, the occupation attempts continue to Judaize Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in Occupied East Jerusalem, and this time through attempts to control (Karam Al Ja'ouni) under the pretext of Jewish ownership, which will steal more than 15000 square meters and the displacement of about 100 Palestinian families of residents of the area. In order to create

a settlement between East and West Jerusalem and to erase the dividing line between the two parts of the city and to Judaize all areas surrounding the walls of Jerusalem, and change Palestinian neighborhoods to residential areas in the vicinity of Israeli settlement. In Ain al-Daraj, a historic water eye, the occupation and the settlement associations seized it and carried out excavations at the site. The task of managing its affairs was handed over to Al-Ad Association, which closed its eyes to the Palestinian citizens and organized tours in Al-Ain and collecting money in return.

33. The racist campaign and the policy of ethnic cleansing in the service of the settlements are intensifying with the approaching early Israeli parliamentary elections looming as the right-wingers race to propose bills, particularly those that deepen the Judaization of occupied East Jerusalem and its environs. These laws include the so-called Elad Law, which allows settlers to build in the so-called national parks. If this law is passed, the settlement community, as confirmed by Israeli human rights organizations, will deepen its control and influence in the town of Silwan. This is in addition to accelerating the implementation of the project to build an air train that runs along the walls of the Old City and the Holy Temple and distort their reality.

34. Faced with these racist policies, the Macedonians emphasized their attachment to the established and legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people in general and their national and human rights in occupied East Jerusalem as the eternal capital of the State of Palestine and an integral part of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, through their total boycott of municipal elections in Jerusalem. This collective public position is a Palestinian national response, rejecting not only racist colonialist occupation policies, but also the rejection of all forms of annexation, Judaization, ethnic cleansing, repression, oppression, expulsion and persecution, as well as blatant American bias towards occupation and settlement, and the decision taken by President Trump against Jerusalem and relocation of his country's embassy to it. Where the Macedonians have proved this resolute and decisive historical position that they are the ones who draw with their courage and steadfastness the dividing line between occupied East Jerusalem and West Jerusalem.

35. In the area of the Jordan Valley, the Israeli occupation forces declared dozens of dunums in Ras al-Ahmar area and the village of 'Atouf in the eastern part of Tubas governorate. They closed the Palestinian farmers from their land, destroyed the water lines and confiscated more than 350,000 square meters. Of the land belonging to (Lakhla Makhoul in the northern Jordan Valley), as a link in the plans of the occupation aimed at displacing the Palestinian citizens from the occupied Jordanians and Judaizing them with settlement, in the context of the comprehensive war being waged by the Israeli government headed by Benjamin Netanyahu on the Palestinian presence in the Jordan Valley and the implementation of previous plans to promote settlement and deepen the Jewish presence in the occupied Palestinian valleys. This is currently being implemented within a plan supervised by the Prime Minister's Office in cooperation with the ministries and settlement councils in the Jordan Valley. The aim of the Israeli government is to implement its plan in the area of the Jordan Valley and end the Palestinian presence there.

36. In August, the so-called Civil Administration of the Ministry of the Israeli Army approved the construction of over 1,000 new settlement units in various parts of the occupied West Bank, most of them outside the so-called "large settlement blocs", creating a state of interdependence and networking between all settlements, settlement outposts and settlement blocs, through construction of hundreds of large roads that consume large areas of Palestinian land, and turn the entire settlement in the occupied West Bank into a single settlement bloc linked to the Israeli depth, which erases the so-called Green Line, and annex vast parts of the occupied West Bank to Israel as a de facto imposed by occupation forces.

37. The Israeli occupation authorities have been waging a fierce war against the Palestinian national and humanitarian presence in the areas designated as (C), continuing the ethnic cleansing of these areas, while escalating demolition of Palestinian homes, buildings and economic facilities, and handover demolition notification as is the case in south-west of Jenin and in Musafir Yeta, with the aim of judaization and impose Israeli law on them. At the same time, settlement deepening and settlement expansion and settlement outposts are increasing at the expense of the land of the occupied State of Palestine, as is the case with the Israeli government's approval of the construction of 650 new settlement units in (Bethel) settlement.

38. We call upon the international community to ensure the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), which affirms that Israeli settlement constitutes a flagrant violation of international law and an obstacle to peace and calls upon Israel to immediately and fully cease all settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as refrain from establishing or relocating any diplomatic mission in Jerusalem to the Holy City as well as not to recognize any changes to the June 4, 1967 borders, other than the changes agreed by the parties through negotiations.

V. ISRAELI VIOLATIONS OF THE SANCTITY OF HOLY SITES AND PLACES OF WORSHIP AND WORSHIPERS IN JERUSALEM:

39. The occupation forces and police attacked the monks of the Coptic Church opposite Church of the Holy Sepulcher and arrested one of them last October. This brutal aggression comes in the context of attempts by the occupying authorities to impose full control over occupied East Jerusalem and its Christian and Islamic holy sites and its attempts to change the historical and legal reality by force. It is considered an intervention by occupation authorities in the church by actions that totally contravene with international law and a blatant violation of international humanitarian law. It is not within the jurisdiction of the occupation authorities or the municipality to intervene in the repair within the Church, since the eastern part of the Holy City is a Palestinian area subject to the rules of International humanitarian law. The Monastery of the Sultan of the Coptic Orthodox Church is located inside the walls of the old town of Jerusalem in the Nasari neighborhood. This violation calls upon UNESCO and relevant UN organizations to assume their responsibilities in protecting places of worship and free access to them and ending the continuous Israeli attacks on the holy sites and clerics in the city.

40. The Israeli authorities also beat several worshipers and guards of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and arrested five of them, in conjunction with the escalation of Israeli incursions into the mosque on the eve of Yom Kippur in September following calls by right-wing groups to intensify intrusions into the Al-Aqsa Mosque during the holidays. The Israeli police assaults coincided with intense intrusions of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The incursions were carried out through the Mugrabi Gate, in the western wall of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, which is controlled by the Israeli police. In flagrant violation of the right of Muslim worshipers to perform their religious rites, which would provoke a crisis of religious coexistence in the Holy City and drag the whole region into a religious war the consequences of which cannot be predicted.

41. According to figures published by the Hebrew media, approximately 2,800 Jews entered the courtyards of Al-Aqsa Mosque in the same period. These dangerous field developments and the constant threats of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and its legal and historical status as a result of a large increase in the number of rabbis who lead the mobilization of these incursions and participation, through campaigns of incitement through various social media, in full view of the Israeli government and its various arms. This is in addition to the significant increase in the number of children and young people who are integrated into incursions.

42. The attacks and incursions into the Al-Aqsa Mosque and its courtyards are accompanied by a large-scale campaign of judaization of the surroundings of the mosque and the Old City of Jerusalem. This is evident in the facilities given to the extremist organizations and settlement organizations that have become the occupying power under different names. In an attempt to transform their Talmudic statements into reality and evidence of the power of occupation, they are used as guides to market their biblical narrative. It is a dangerous sign that threatens the Temple Mount with the aim of dividing it not only temporarily but also spatially with the establishment of the alleged Jewish temple in the courtyards and on the ruins of the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

43. In a systematic targeting of the Palestinian citizen, Israeli violations and the campaign of arrests and abductions carried out against the people and their cadres in Occupied East Jerusalem and its surroundings are increasing. In addition, the barbaric incursions by the Israeli occupation forces and their various apparatuses in the Palestinian areas are escalating, with heavy gunfire being fired late at night, and the destruction and demolishing of houses and contents, especially during arrests and kidnappings. Which constitute blatant and flagrant violations of international law, international humanitarian law, human rights principles and the Fourth Geneva Convention. Where the occupation forces and their forces in October last year to arrest the governor of Jerusalem and a number of cadres of the province.

44. In the face of these violations and arbitrary practices that are contrary to international law and international humanitarian law, it is clear that Israel is applying a legal, political and military regime that provides preferential treatment to Israeli settlers. In return, it imposes arbitrary restrictions, practices and repression on the Palestinians

which calls for the description of the State of Israel as an apartheid state, which practices a racist separation system that contradicts the provisions of law, norms and human values. And requires the world to take a clear position with the State of Israel, the occupying power.

VI. FIELD SITUATION, PRISONERS IN ISRAELI PRISONS:

45. Palestinian protests intensified during the last year after declaration by American administration on Jerusalem and since March 30, 2018 on the anniversary of the Land Day, the great peaceful marches began, in the Gaza Strip, and the Israeli occupation forces launched these marches in the launch of violent repression used live bullets by Snipers to execute peaceful demonstrators. The United Nations has called for urgent investigations into the use of lethal force by the Israeli occupation forces in the face of peaceful demonstrations in the occupied West Bank or Gaza. The organization called on Israel to conduct prompt and thorough investigations into all incidents in which the use of force led to demise of martyrs.

46. The Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip escalated significantly during the first half of last year, resulting in the deaths of more than 200 martyrs, 6 of whom were in the custody of the Israeli occupation forces, including 21 children and 3 persons, people with disabilities, and wounding of about (15000) citizens. The attacks included launching air strikes, shooting operations on the eastern border of the Gaza Strip, ground incursions and artillery shelling, while the Israeli occupation forces arrested more than 300 citizens from the Gaza Strip. A number of journalists were killed and some 175 others were injured.

47. The policy of execution carried out by the Israeli occupation has become the hallmark of its repeated violations against the unarmed Palestinian civilians. This indicates the arrogance of this occupation in the absence of international supervision and accountability for these flagrant violations of the most basic elements of international law and international humanitarian law. Not all Palestinians have been released from the oppression of Israeli occupation forces targeting live bullets, women and children, the elderly and young people, medical and media personnel, and even those with special needs. During the peaceful return marches in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli occupation forces assassinated the medic martyr (Razan Al-Najjar) while performing her medical duty to assist the wounded. She was assassinated by a bullet in the back, deliberately snatched by Israeli occupation snipers, even though she wore uniforms for medical personnel. The occupation forces also carried out the field execution against the martyr (Fadi Abu Salah) for the second time, after targeting him first in 2008 with a missile directed, and managed to injure his feet and made him disabled. The martyr Fadi, despite his disability, went out in the march of return in the memory of the Nakba to raise his voice high, rejecting occupation, injustice and tyranny.

48. The Israeli Government has also continued to impose strict and discriminatory restrictions on the rights of Palestinians, restrict the movement of people and goods from and to the Gaza Strip, and facilitate the illegal transfer of Israeli citizens to settlements in

the occupied West Bank. Israel continues its 12-year closure of Gaza, imposing restrictions on the supply of electricity and water, restricting access to medical care, educational and economic opportunities, and perpetuating poverty. About 70 percent of Gaza's 1.9 million people depend on humanitarian aid, with more than 60 percent of the population of the Gaza Strip being Palestinian refugees.

49. In the West Bank, Israel has imposed severe restrictions on movement of Palestinians through checkpoints, the separation barrier, and continued closures of areas and roads. Palestinians receive ill-treatment and deliberate humiliation by the Israeli occupation authorities at the crossings and checkpoints, with the aim of restricting their living conditions. On the pretext that Palestinians are not getting close to Israeli settlements, they are forced to resort to long-bypass roads. Israel has also continued to build the separation wall, 85 per cent of which lies inside the West Bank, not along the Green Line, and isolates 11,000 Palestinians on the western side of the Barrier without allowing them to travel to Israel to access services in the West Bank.

50. The crisis of the Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli prisons is increasing as a result of serious violations of human rights and serious violations of international humanitarian law. The number of prisoners in Israeli jails is approximately 6400 prisoners, of whom 62 are minors, among them 10 minors, (450) administrative detainees, in addition to the presence of (12) members of the Legislative Council in detention, and detainees continue to suffer from the difficult conditions of detention which violate the most basic human rights and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 concerning prisoners and the protection of civilians in wartime. Administrative detentions are in escalation for prolonged periods without charge and without trial according to the legal principles internationally guaranteed, and the absence of proper medical care, and the prevalence of medical neglect of prisoners, especially those who are ill and subjected to torture, harassment, ill-treatment and prevention from family visits.

51. In a racist act, the Israeli Knesset passed a bill to allow the Israeli military prosecution to apply the death penalty against Palestinian prisoners accused of carrying out operations against the occupation forces. He said that the Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons are subjected to the most cruel treatment and medical negligence, An extrajudicial execution of more than 200 prisoners has been recorded in Israeli prisons. This law of the prisoners reveals the true face of Israel, and expresses the criminal doctrine of the State of Israel against Palestinians. The international community must shoulder its responsibilities to stop these grave violations against the Palestinian prisoners and demand their release.

52. Through this law, and other legislation of a racist nature, such as Jewish Nationalism, Israel reveals to the world its true racist face, in clear violation of all international laws, charters and conventions that guarantee the protection of civilians and prisoners during war, especially provisions of the Third Geneva Convention and The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Bangkok Rules). The world is again called upon to stand up to this Israeli tyranny, which continues

day by day in blatant violation of the rights of the Palestinian people. And that all the countries of the world are called upon to deal with Israel as an apartheid state under its laws that have been legislated, and to overthrow the mask of democracy that it claims.

VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

53. Support the Palestinian people in their struggle for freedom and the establishment of their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital on the borders of the Fourth of June 1967, living side by side with the State of Israel.

54. Support peaceful resolution to end Arab-Israeli conflict and achieve lasting peace and security in the region on the basis of the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy embodied in all relevant United Nations resolutions and in accordance with the principles of international law, the Arab initiative and the decisions of the Organization of African Unity/ African Union.

55. Call for the resumption of peace negotiations between the parties, under multilateral international auspices and within a specific timeframe, in accordance with the terms of reference established by the resolutions of the international legitimacy, while ensuring the implementation of the outcome of the negotiations, in order to implement the principle of the two-state solution and the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital without derogation, partition or postponement.

56. Reject all unilateral measures concerning the occupied city of Jerusalem, consider the city of Jerusalem as a negotiating place, and the most important final status issues in accordance with international legitimacy, and affirm the right of the Palestinian people to consider East Jerusalem within the 1967 borders as the eternal capital of the State of Palestine.

57. **We affirm** that Palestinian refugees are all Palestinians who have been displaced from the historic land of Palestine since the 1948 Nakba, or had left before this date and have not been able to return, and their relative background to the current generation. We reject the measures aimed at the liquidation of the UNRWA services and warn against the consequences of the US administration's attitude towards the Palestinian refugees, contrary to UN resolution 194. We call for the maintenance of the Agency and its functions until refugees return to their lands and homes.

58. We further call on Israel to limit the de facto policy of continuing settlement in the Palestinian territories and judaizing Jerusalem by seeking to change the demographic balance and survey the historical and Islamic monuments of the city as stipulated in the relevant United Nations resolutions, the latest of which was resolution 2334 of 2016, as well as the Fourth Geneva Convention.

59. Renew call for all African countries to end all forms of direct and indirect dealing with the illegal Israeli colonial settlement system in the territory of the State of Palestine and to take all measures to stop such dealing in accordance with the provisions of

international legitimacy, taking example of what the international community has done to the apartheid regime in South Africa

60. Reject and condemn targeting Palestinian civilians by live ammunition by the Israeli occupation authorities and carrying out field executions against them, who take peaceful, unarmed rallies demanding their rights and land, and consider it war crimes, which calls for legal accountability.

Reject and condemn racist laws against the Palestinians, such as the law of the execution of prisoners and the law of Jewish nationalism. We call upon the international community to take a firm stand against these racist violations, and obligate Israel to withdraw from these legislations, affecting the foundations of values and morals and the rules of international humanitarian law.

61. The need to provide international protection for the land and people of the State of Palestine, in order to end the occupation and to preserve the opportunity for a two-state solution. Pursuant to Security Council resolutions 605 (1987), 672 (1967) and 673 (1990) and 904 (1994), which were based on the Geneva Conventions and reaffirmed their applicability to the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967.

62. We also call upon the Israeli occupation authorities to release prisoners and war prisoners, especially children, women, the elderly and the sick, while ensuring their safety and to end individual and collective repressive practices against the Palestinian people, which exacerbate their suffering and fuel hatred between the Arab and Israeli populations.

**DRAFT DECLARATION
ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND PALESTINE**

WE, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, meeting at the Thirty-Second Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union held in Addis Ababa, on 10 and 11 February 2019,

TAKING NOTE of the report on the situation in the Middle East and Palestine and recalling all the previous resolutions and decisions adopted by the Organization of African Unity / African Union on the situation in Palestine aimed at achieving a lasting peace and security in the Middle East.

REAFFIRMING our full support for the Palestinian people and the Palestine Liberation Organization in their legitimate struggle against the Israeli occupation under the leadership of President Mahmoud Abbas in order to restore their legitimate rights to establish an independent Palestinian State living side by side with the State of Israel.

REAFFIRMING FURTHER our desire to find a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict in accordance with the principles of international law and all relevant United Nations' resolutions calling for the establishment of a Palestinian state on the borders of June 4, 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital in implementation of the two-state solution and the implementation of UN Resolution 194 on the return of Palestinian refugees.

RENEWING our call for the resumption of negotiations between the two sides to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, support all initiatives aimed at finding a lasting solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and negotiate through an international multilateral mechanism that includes all permanent status issues, borders, security, settlements, refugees, water, and prisoners, while ensuring compliance with international legitimacy, implementing what is agreed upon within a specified period of time and providing guarantees for implementation.

AFFIRMING the steadfastness of our position in support of the Palestinian cause and the continued efforts of the Union to achieve a comprehensive and just peace for the Palestinian people. We expect that all Member States will work to achieve this endeavor in their international relations, and that any cooperation of the countries of the continent with the State of Israel should not be supportive of the occupying entity at the expense of African support for the Palestinian cause.

RENEWING our call to all countries to uphold the legitimate legal status of the city of East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine, and to refrain from any action or act that would undermine the legitimate status of the city of Jerusalem, in particular to refrain from transferring embassies represented by Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. We look forward to member states to abide by the decisions of the African consensus and the Union's policy on the Palestinian issue, in the interest of CONDEMN the Israeli practices against Palestinian prisoners and detainees and reject the policy of administrative detention. CONDEMN the arbitrary measures and sentences imposed on detainees,

especially children and women, in Israeli jails, which deprive them of the minimum rights guaranteed by international human rights law and norms, including the Geneva Convention on the Rights of Women and Children. We therefore call upon the Israeli Government to release all Palestinian and Arab prisoners in Israeli jails immediately and unconditionally.

REAFFIRMING that all settlements in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan are null and void and condemn the policy of land confiscation, house demolitions, forced displacement of civilians, policies of racial discrimination and all measures of collective punishment implemented in the course of intensive colonial activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory constitute a violation and a war crime under international law, and we express our deep concern at the subsequent declarations of resignation by the Israeli Government, which have predicted that the chances of achieving peace will decline.

We hereby declare the following:

1. **CONDEMN** all repressive measures of occupation, and the policy of torture and execution in the field against Palestinian citizens, especially targeting medical personnel, children, women and people with special needs who go out peacefully. We consider them crimes against humanity in accordance with the Fourth Geneva Convention. We call for the urgent international protection of the Palestinian people under occupation in accordance with the decisions of international legitimacy in this regard.
2. **REAFFIRM FURTHER** that the entire territory of East Jerusalem within the borders of 4 June 1967 is the capital of the and the decisions of the previous African Union in this regard. We call for the preservation of the sanctity of the Christian and Islamic holy sites in the holy city and the freedom to practice the religious rites of the heavenly religions. We call on all Member States in their relations to take into account the specificity of East Jerusalem as the eternal capital of the State of Palestine.
3. **DEPLORE** the successive Israeli policies aimed at Judaization the city of Jerusalem and its historical, legal and demographic nature, and the continuous aggression against Islamic and Christian holy sites. Imposing strict security restrictions on the worshipers and restricting freedom of worship in the Holy City. We call upon the United Nations to monitor the implementation of UNESCO's decision of 26 October 2016 concerning Jerusalem and to ensure that the full implementation of the decision is respected.
4. **CONDEMN** the policy of Judaization, ethnic cleansing through forced displacement, house demolitions and the policy of racial discrimination practiced by the Israeli occupation against Palestinians in occupied East Jerusalem through evacuation orders for Palestinian Bedouin communities in the Red Khan in the vicinity of Jerusalem. In order to isolate the holy city, cut off its geographical

connection with the territories of the occupied West Bank in 1967, and achieve the demographic superiority of the settlers on the owners of the land of Jerusalem.

5. **CONDEMN** the Israeli settlement plans being implemented at an accelerated pace in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, the capital of the State of Palestine, and the Jordan Valley in contravention of the rules of international law, in particular Security Council resolution 2334. And the policy of encouraging settlement through legislative laws and the transfer of Jews to the outposts with the granting of additional privileges.
6. **RENEW** our call on all African countries to end all forms of direct and indirect dealing with the illegal Israeli colonial settlement system in the territory of the State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 2334 and our previous decisions in this regard. And take all measures to stop this deal, similar to what the Organization of African Unity of the apartheid regime in South Africa. We affirm that any dealing with these illegal innovations is a violation of the rules of international law, and encourages the Israeli occupation in its adherence to Palestinian national rights.
7. **REJECT** the Jewish National Law, which recognizes the Jewishness of the State of Israel, restricts the state and citizenship to the Jewish people only, and exposes two million Arab Palestinians (Muslim and Christian) from full rights. And supports the confiscation of Palestinian land in favor of Israeli settlement, which is considered national values. We consider it racist legislation that enshrines the apartheid regime in flagrant violation of international laws and norms.
8. **DEPLORE** the campaign of incitement and distortion aimed at Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian leadership, which carries in its agenda the purposive projects of the Palestinian cause, and we refuse to hold the Palestinian leadership responsible for not responding to the call for negotiations. We renew our support for the vision and initiative of President Abbas for peace presented to the Security Council on 20 February 2018, which is based on the outcomes of international legitimacy and the Arab peace initiative, through international multilateral mediation, within a specific time frame.
9. **CONSIDER** that the Palestinian refugees are all Palestinians who have been displaced from the historic land of Palestine since the Nakba in 1948, or left before this date and could not return, and their successor is related to the current generation. All of them acquire the individual and absolute right to return to their lands and homes from which they have been abandoned, while retaining the right to just compensation for the harm suffered.
10. **REJECT** the measures aimed at the liquidation of UNRWA services and warn of the consequences of the US administration's attitude toward the Palestinian refugees, contrary to the provisions of UN Resolution 194. We call for the

maintenance of the Agency and its functions in accordance with the UN mandate in the General Assembly resolution United Nations No. 302.

11. **SUPPORT** the legitimate Palestinian right to full membership in the United Nations. We call upon Member States to support this entitlement to the State of Palestine and to support the efforts of the Palestinians to join international agencies, conventions and protocols. We support the vision of the Palestinian leadership for a final solution to the conflict in accordance with the two-state solution, which enjoys international consensus, rejection of partial and incomplete solutions and the idea of a provisional state.
12. **CONSIDER** rules of international humanitarian law and in accordance with the Third Geneva Convention of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto. We condemn Israel's adoption of a law that would sanction the execution of Palestinian prisoners, which constitutes a clear violation of all international laws, charters and conventions that guarantee the protection of civilians and prisoners during war. The international community is called upon to stand up against these arbitrary measures.
13. **EXPRESS** our deep concern about the deterioration of the economic and humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip as a result of the Israeli blockade and hold the Israeli occupation fully responsible for the situation in the Gaza Strip. We believe that the crisis in the Gaza Strip is an occupation crisis and that this crisis should be dealt with by ending the occupation and enabling the geographical and political unity of the Palestinian territories between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. And not dealing with it as just a humanitarian crisis that requires relief. We call on the international community to work to end this unjust Israeli blockade.
14. **AFFIRM** that a just solution to the Palestinian cause and the achievement of comprehensive peace and an end to the Israeli conflict can only be achieved through the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state on the borders of June 4 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with East Jerusalem as its capital and not as a capital on the outskirts of East Jerusalem. . And that there is no possibility of a political settlement and an end to the conflict with the establishment of a state in the Gaza Strip or a Palestinian state without the Gaza Strip.
15. **REITERATE** that a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East requires full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories to the June 1967 line, including the Syrian Golan Heights and the territories still occupied in Southern Lebanon.

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